

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 01043 122350Z

67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /053 W

----- 119823

O 122317Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9122

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 1043

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, CA

SUBJ: MINISTERIAL INTERFERENCE IN COURT CASES

REF: OTTAWA 0994

SUMMARY: PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER DRURY RESIGNS AND LALONDE AND CHRETIEN APOLOGIZE FOLLOWING TABLING OF REPORT FROM QUEBEC CHIEF JUSTICE ON ALLEGED MINISTERIAL INTERFERENCE WITH JUDICIAL PROCESS. LATER IN DAY, TRUDEAU REFUSED ACCEPT DRURY RESIGNATION AND REFUSED ORDER PUBLIC INQUIRY.
END SUMMARY.

1. IMBROGLIO OVER ALLEGED LIBERAL MINISTERS INTERFERING IN JUDICIAL PROCESS (REFTEL) TOOK DRAMATIC TURN TODAY WITH TABLING IN COMMONS OF REPORT OF QUEBEC SUPERIOR COURT CHIEF JUSTICE (PARA 4 REFTL) AND CONTEMPORANEOUS SUBMISSION OF RESIGNATION OF PUBLIC WORKS MIN DRURY WHO ALSO MIN OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

2. NORMAL ROUTINE OF QUESTION PERIOD TODAY SUSPENDED AS REPORT TABLED AND THE THREE MINISTERS UNDER FIRE (DRURY, LALONE AND CHRETIEN) MADE STATEMENTS. LALONDE AND CHRETIEN EXPRESSED REGRETS ABOUT MISUNDERSTANDINGS THEIR ACTIONS MIGHT HAVE CAUSED AND
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 01043 122350Z

RENDERED GENERAL APOLOGIES. THEY DID NOT, HOWEVER,

GO FURTHER THAN THAT. DRURY, ON OTHER HAND, OFFERED RESIGNATION REFERRING TO APPARENT DETERMINATION OF CHIEF JUSTICE THAT HIS CONDUCT HAD BEEN IMPROPER.

3. OPPOSITION LAUDED DRURY FOR TAKING HONORABLE COURSE, EXPRESSED REGRET AT HIS DEPARTURE FROM CABINET, BUT PRESSED HARD FOR INDEPENDENT INQUIRY. TRUDEAU IN QUESTION PERIOD EXPRESSED INTENTION OF MAKING STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE LATE AFTERNOON.

4. IN LATE AFTERNOON STATEMENT CLEARLY PREPARED IN HASTE, TRUDEAU WITH AMPLE DOSE OF CRITICISM OF MINISTER'S BAD JUDGMENT NONETHELESS REFUSED TO ACCEPT DRURY RESIGNATION AND REFUSED TO ORDER A PUBLIC INQUIRY. HE NOTED THAT CHIEF JUSTICE HAD FOUND THAT CHRETIEN CASE INVOLVED IMPROPER PRACTICE AND LALONDE CASE UNUSUAL PROCEEDINGS BUT THAT NEITHER REPRESENTED INTERFERENCE WITH JUDICIARY AND, THUS, CASES CLOSED. WITH DRURY, CHIEF JUSTICE FOUND "IMPROPER" ACTIVITIES AND NOTED THAT THE FACTS WERE "GRAVE" BUT APPARENTLY ALSO FOUND NO GROSS INTERFERENCE IN JUDICIAL PROCESS. TRUDEAU ADDED THAT JUSTICE MIN BASFORD HAD REVIEWED SITUATION AT TRUDEAU REQUEST AND HAD FOUND NO GROUNDS FOR CHARGES OF ILLEGALITY.

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: OPPOSITION HAS NOW TASTED SOME BLOOD AND CLEARLY ANXIOUS FOR MUCH MORE. OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN EXPRESSED IN STRONG LANGUAGE COMPLETE DISAGREEMENT WITH TRUDEAU DECISION NOT TO ACCEPT DRURY RESIGNATION OR TO ORDER PUBLIC INQUIRY. OPPOSITION WILL DO ALL IN ITS POWER TO PRESS FOR DRURY RESIGNATION AND PUBLIC INQUIRY. THEY WILL ALSO ATTEMPT TO WIDEN TARGET AREA, IF POSSIBLE, PARTICULARLY TO INCLUDE ANDRE OUELLET, THE MINISTER FOR WHOM DRURY INTERCEDED. IN FAST MOVING EVENTS OF DAY IT DIFFICULT NOW TO ASSESS LIKELY IMPACT ON PUBLIC, PARTICULARLY GIVEN RELATIVE TOLERANCE IN CANADA FOR QUESTIONABLE PRACTICES. HOWEVER, TODAY'S EVENTS CAN ONLY ADD TO GROWING PUBLIC DISENCHANTMENT WITH LIBERALS MENTIONED REFTEL. ENDERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LEGISLATORS, CORRUPTION, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS, ALLEGATIONS, COURT PROCEEDINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OTTAWA01043
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760094-0975
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760366/aaaacgkk.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 OTTAWA 994
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 APR 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <02 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINISTERIAL INTERFERENCE IN COURT CASES
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, CA, (DRURY, CHARLES), (CHRETIEN, JEAN), (LALONDE, MARC)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006